

FORM B - BUILDING

Assessor's #  
Map 81

USGS Quad  
Hanover

Area

Form #  
1

Massachusetts Historical Commission  
Massachusetts Archives Building  
220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Town **Hanson**

Place

Address **542 Liberty Street**

Historic Name **Town Hall**

Use: Present **town hall**

Original **town hall**

Date **1872**

Source **White, Houses**

Style/Form **Italianate/hipped block**

Architect **N/A**

Exterior Material:

Foundation **granite**

Wall/Trim **clapboard**

Roof **asphalt**

Outbuildings **storage shed**

Major Alterations **one-story addition, 1941-42**

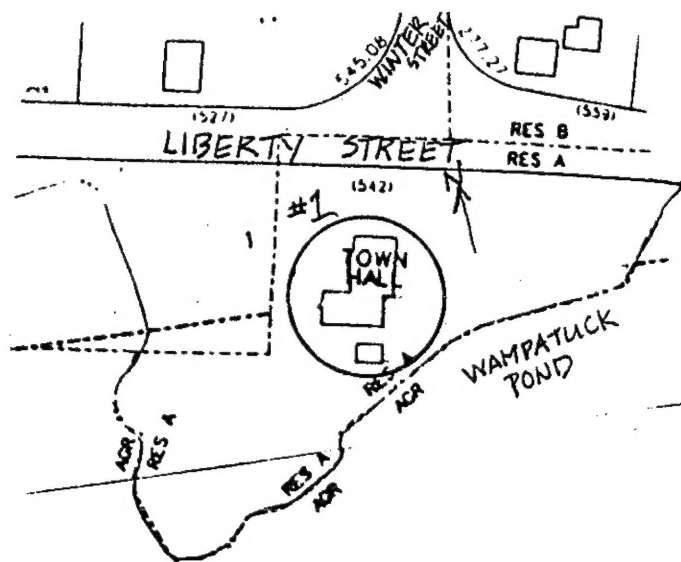
Condition **excellent**

Moved **no**

Acreage **less than one acre**

Setting **village**

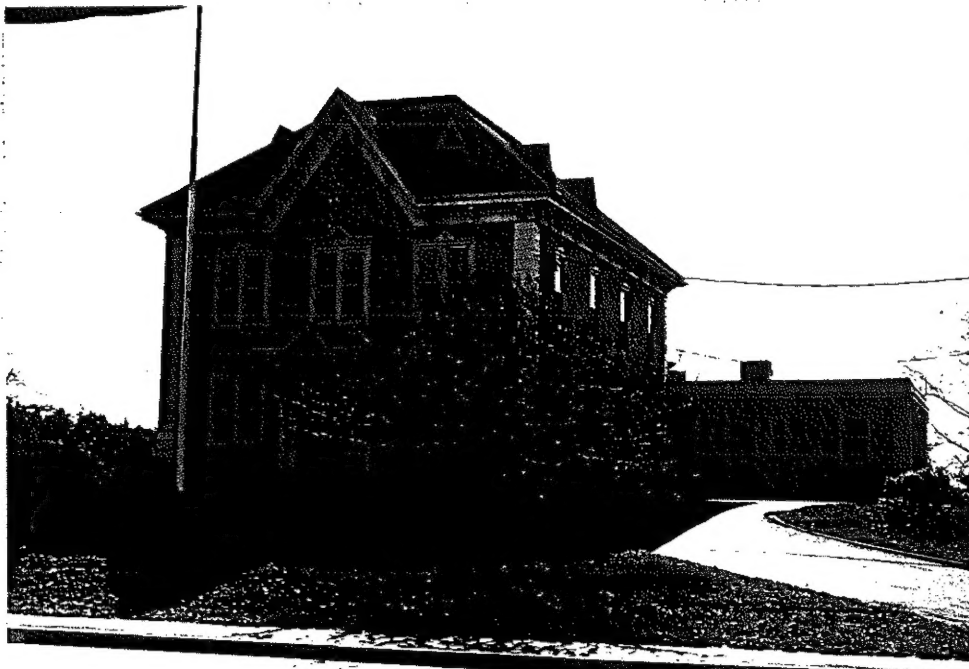
Photo roll/frame **1/13**



Recorded by **Dempsey/Driemeyer**

Organization **Hanson Historical  
Commission**

Date **February 1996**



## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Hanson's Town Hall is a well-preserved example of a third-quarter of the nineteenth century civic structure in the Italianate style. The style derives primarily from the massing and decorative detailing. The main mass of this two-and-one-half story hipped block is three bays wide by four bays deep. A one-story, flat-roofed rear addition produces an L-shaped footprint. The primary massing additions to this rectilinear structure are concentrated upon the building's facade: a facade gable is centered above the overhanging pedimented entry porch. The symmetrically fenestrated facade has pairs of windows at the first and third bays on the first story and at each bay on the second story. Pairs of tiny gabled dormers with lancet windows punctuate the front and side elevation roof slopes. The symmetrically fenestrated side elevations have single, tall 1/1 sash windows at each bay. A handicap ramp leads to a secondary entry in the addition on the right side. Another secondary entry is located in the re-entrant angle between the main mass and addition on the left side. The classically derived decorative detailing emphasizes the cornice line, corners, and window and door openings. Characteristic Italianate style detailing includes the wide, molded and bracketed cornice; the quoins (which unusually are all the same size); the molded window surrounds with pedimented lintels and bracketed sills; and the pedimented entry porch with a denticulated cornice supported by overscaled brackets. A small, one-story, hip-roofed, clapboarded storage shed is located to the rear of the building. The hall stands out in isolation, sited on a rise with Wampatuck Pond to the east and south. Setback from the intersection of two major thoroughfares the town hall has a semi-circular driveway in front and asphalt paved parking areas on the other three sides. A 1905 Civil War monument, originally located at the Fern Hill Cemetery, was moved to the west side lawn in 1936.

## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

This area of Hanson at the intersection of Liberty, Winter and Maquan streets is somewhat the geographic center of the town and remained sparsely developed until the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The Town Hall's 1872 construction date parallels the increased centralization of civic processes in the last quarter of the nineteenth century nationwide. According to White, Charles H. Bonney of South Abington was the builder. The rear addition, which dates to 1941-42, was done by Horace C. Atwood.

## REFERENCES

Smith, Plan of Hanson, 1830  
Walling, Map of Hanson, 1856  
Walker, Atlas of Plymouth County, 1879  
Richards, Atlas of Plymouth County, 1903  
White, History of Houses of Hanson

✓ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. See NR Criteria Statement form.

Massachusetts Historical Commission  
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Community  
**Hanson**  
  
Area

Property Address  
**542 Liberty Street**  
  
Form #  
**1**

## National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form



Check all that apply:

☒ Individually eligible. ☐ Eligible only in a historic district.  
☐ Contributing to a potential district. ☐ Potential historic district.

Criteria: ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Statement of Significance by **Dempsey/Driemeyer.**

The Hanson Town Hall at 542 Liberty Street is a well-preserved example of a third-quarter of the nineteenth century civic structure in the Italianate style. The two-and-one-half story rectangular hipped block displays a nice variety of Italianate decorative detailing including a bracketed cornice, quoins, and pedimented lintels and bracketed sills around the windows. The town hall's form resembles that of several other public spaces constructed in Hanson in the late nineteenth century. The Hanson Town Hall meets criteria A and C at the local level. It retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.